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## Cristea Roberts Gallery

43 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JG  
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## Exhibition Information

Press Contact:  
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### Sensing Abstraction

#### Anni Albers | Gillian Ayres | Christiane Baumgartner | Rana Begum | Bridget Riley

10 March - 22 April 2023

*Sensing Abstraction* is an exhibition of works on paper by five female abstract artists, each of whose practice revolves around varying approaches to abstraction.

Abstract drawings and prints by Christiane Baumgartner, the making of which the artist likens to the process of handwriting, are shown together with a selection of the final prints made by the late Gillian Ayres, a leading abstract artist of her generation. Geometric abstraction is explored through the graphic works of Anni Albers, Rana Begum and Bridget Riley.

This display coincides with the major exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery, *Action, Gesture, Paint: Women Artists and Global Abstraction*.

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**Christiane Baumgartner** (b. 1967), who is widely known for her woodcuts, began working freehand directly on plates in 2018 when she created her first abstract prints, a suite of six etchings based on biro pen drawings that she printed in black and ultramarine.

Her exploration of this method, a process she likens to handwriting, has since progressed to a larger group of works Baumgartner describes as 'reverse drawings.' To make these the artist inks small wooden blocks with a single colour, presses a piece of Japanese paper onto each surface, and draws on the versos. To make the series *Französische Suite V*, 2019, Baumgartner repeated this process up to twenty times, so that the resulting drawings range in colour and tone.

**Gillian Ayres** (1930 - 2018) was one of the leading exponents of the radical developments in abstract painting dominating British Art in the late 1950s and 1960s. Eliminating any reference to the outside world, her work focused directly on the abstract properties of the paint surface, texture, scale and colour.

Ayres adopted a variety of styles and techniques throughout her career. Progressing from the early use of oil and ripolin thrown and poured onto wooden panels towards her late use of use of thick oil paint and woodblock printing to create works with clear and defined edges and abstract shapes, Ayres always forged her own path in a completely original way. Woodcuts from Ayres' final body of work, in which she appropriates colour and light from the natural world to create prints full of movement, will be exhibited.

**Anni Albers** (1899 – 1994) devoted the latter part of her life entirely to printmaking, finding it the ideal vehicle to try out new compositional patterns. Exploring geometric abstraction and using different printmaking techniques, Albers was able to achieve results not possible in any other medium.

Intricate lines, triangular forms and rhomboidal patterns, such as those in *Do I – VI*, 1973, were inspired by both pre-Columbian art and contemporary industry. Albers use of layering, rotation and subtle combinations of colour created works on paper that remain optically challenging today.

**Rana Begum** (b. 1977) works within the parameters of abstraction to explore form, colour and light. The resulting geometric patterns and often luminous coloured surfaces of her works create changing sensations for the viewer. One of Begum's first print projects, a group of small etchings, *No. 860*, 2018, will be displayed alongside a series of four larger mesh prints.

Featuring overlapping fluorescent colours and geometric patterns, these works explore both the ambiance and unpredictability created by neighbouring colours. Begum's investigations into colour relationships and visual perception are influenced by minimalism and constructivism. She is also inspired by the urban landscape as well as patterns from traditional Islamic art and architecture.

The prints of **Bridget Riley** (b. 1931), one of Britain's greatest living artists, reflect not only precision but the beauty of her painting practice. Working almost exclusively in silkscreen since the 1960s, Riley employs a medium which enables precise delineation of form and colour. She creates complex structures which produce visual sensations and experiences that are both subtle and arresting.

Although the appearance of Riley's work has shifted over the years, the consistency of the intention has remained steadfast. Recent prints on show in the exhibition explore broader pictorial issues, breaking up the picture plane and opening up sensations of space and depth. Repetition and rhythm, as seen in *Measure for Measure*, 2020, translate into shapes that seem to advance and recede from the surface.

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### About Cristea Roberts Gallery

Cristea Roberts Gallery is a leading international contemporary art gallery with a particular focus on original prints and works on paper. Since its inception, the gallery has commissioned a significant number of editions by a wide range of artists, whilst also representing others for their unique works. The underlying ethos of the gallery has always been artist-led. It was originally founded in 1995 as the Alan Cristea Gallery and changed its name in September 2019 to Cristea Roberts Gallery.

Acknowledged as one of the leading galleries in its field of specialty, the gallery's programme is dedicated to publishing, cataloguing, exhibiting and dealing in original prints and drawings by its roster of over 30 important international artists and Estates. It participates in all the major international art fairs and has a dynamic programme of exhibitions hosted in its bespoke space in Pall Mall, London.

The gallery works closely with international museums on acquisitions and loans, and examples of its editions are held in major public collections around the world including Tate, London, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and Museum of Modern Art, New York.

### Visitor information:

Tues - Fri 11am - 5.30 pm

Sat 11am - 2pm

Closed on Mondays, Sundays and public holidays

Closed over Easter 7 - 10 April 2023

Travel: Piccadilly or Green Park underground station

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